

*Calls for President to honor Governor Ted Strickland's Request for personal assurances on troop equipment, training*

(Washington, DC) Congressman Tim Ryan (OH-17) sent a letter to the President today reiterating Governor Ted Strickland's request for personal assurances that Ohio National Guard Troops being activated receive the training and equipment necessary to perform their mission. Below is the letter.

June 4, 2008

President George Bush

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

I write today to follow up on the letter sent by Governor Ted Strickland on May 26, 2007 addressing the second alert order received by the Ohio National Guard in less than two months. I am disappointed that you have yet to respond to the concerns that the Governor stated, and I echo his request for an answer to these very basic questions.

I stand firm with the Governor and his request that you give personal assurances that every Ohio soldier will have the most up-to-date equipment for the mission they will be asked to perform. This includes body armor, up-armored humvees and other vehicles they need to operate effectively. I also stand firm with the Governor and his request that you give your personal assurances that every Ohio soldier be given appropriate training for their mission. The men and women of the 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team as well as the 838th Military Police Company based in Youngstown deserve to know that they are not being sent into an increasingly volatile situation without the equipment and training they need to stay as safe as possible in a forward operating area.

Although you and I have disagreed on the course of this war from the beginning, it is my sincere hope that we can, at the very least, find common ground on keeping our soldiers safe. In the four years that I have represented Ohio's 17th Congressional District, I have voted for billions of dollars in funds for equipment, training, and improved healthcare for our troops. I have voted to ensure that our Veterans Affairs system has the resources it needs to provide for the more than 25,000 wounded warriors that this misguided war has created and for monies to ensure that our troops are not left stranded in a hostile environment. Mr. President, giving us these assurances is the bare minimum you can do if supporting our troops is truly a priority for you.

Throughout his career, Governor Strickland has been a tireless advocate for the health and wellbeing of our troops, and I urge you to respond immediately to the Governor and me in our call to provide the citizens of Ohio with the guarantee that the Federal Government will honor their sacrifice and provide our troops with the training and equipment they need. Across the country, the National Guard is spread dangerously thin and readiness levels are at historic lows. It is my sincere hope that you will join with us to ensure that our men and women in uniform are protected, and that they are brought home as soon as possible.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Congressman Tim Ryan